

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Tom Rooney (FL-16) issued the following statement after Judge Roger Vinson, of the U.S. District Court in Pensacola, struck down President Obama's health care law, ruling that the individual mandate to buy health insurance is unconstitutional:

"Judge Vinson confirmed what I've said all along – the requirement to purchase health insurance exceeds Congressional power under the Constitution," Rooney said. "Never in our nation's history has the federal government forced every citizen to purchase a product or service from a private company simply as a requirement of being a citizen. This law is a blatant abuse of the federal government's power, and it has no basis in the letter or the intent of the Constitution."

Rooney again called on Congress to repeal that health care law and replace it with legislation that will actually reduce health care costs and expand access to affordable, quality care.

"Health care reform doesn't have to throw the constitution out the window and force unreasonable, costly mandates on individuals and small business owners," Rooney said. "We need patient-centered reforms to bring down costs, like instituting medical liability reform and allowing small businesses and families to pool across state lines. We must make sure that every American, particularly those with preexisting conditions, has access to quality, affordable health insurance."

Judge Vinson issued his ruling today on the lawsuit brought by governors and attorneys general from Florida and 25 other states against President Obama's health care law. The judge declared that "because the individual mandate is unconstitutional and not severable, the entire Act must be declared void." A federal judge in Virginia also ruled the individual mandate unconstitutional in December 13.

Rooney is a former constitutional law professor at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

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